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account is all the more interesting, as he appears to have been able to understand the somewhat unintelligible psychology of the natives and their consequent attitude towards foreigners.

Best of all, the author has embodied some valuable geographic data on the Chaouïa, in the form of an appendix. This territory was but imperfectly known before the advent of French officers. It lies between 34° and $32\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ N. Lat., and extends some 175 kilometers west of longitude $6\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ W. Its inhabitants have all the traits of the fanaticism peculiar to their race. This was primarily the reason why the country remained practically unexplored until about five years ago. In the short interval since then its orographic and hydrographic features have been investigated. Its broader geologic relations have been ascertained. The influence of these factors on the commercial and industrial data furnished by the author may be inferred from his descriptions. To the student these short scientific sketches form perhaps the most interesting portion of the book. Some excellent photographs also help to give a fair idea of the country.

LEON DOMINIAN.

Gold Coast Palaver. Life on the Gold Coast. By Louis P. Bowler. 173 pp.

Portrait. John Long, Ltd., London. 1911. $7\frac{1}{2} \times 5$.

A most unpretentious little book is this, its jacket of an appropriate yellow: just the things seen by a miner who has driven pick into the auriferous reefs of many lands and now on the Gulf of Guinea has found things which struck him as new and strange and likely to interest those whose lives have a shorter tether. Criticism is disarmed at the outset, for the man does not know the first rules of construction. After setting down a caption, if his story does not run to so much as a page, that is a chapter good enough for him. Lindley Murray might have a word to say to him, in fact a great many words, for he does as suits him best with the rules of grammar. Yet the reader is going to prove very cordial to this small narrative. It is such an intimate record of the little known land which lies back of the beach scarcely better known. Every experience here recorded shows itself genuine; no one can doubt its accuracy. There is a charm in the record of the unusual, particularly when it happens to some one else who chances to survive to tell the tale. There is a particularly happy incident of a houseboy who cautioned the author that the cook had "put medicine" into the soup, and when invited to taste his own pottage the cook shrieked "massa, dem soup kill man one time!" Here we have a sample of the jargon of West Africa, the Krooboy, a fecund *lingua franca* which will be found worthy of study by philologists. The sum of such examples amounts to a little more than a thousand words, but they have been found worth extracting for later study. It is upon such simple records as this that we must depend for the most valuable material. A dozen disconnected pages will yield rich treasure to the student of folk lore, particularly valuable as bearing upon Uncle Remus of our South and the Annaky of the West Indies. WILLIAM CHURCHILL.

Congo Life and Folklore. Part I: Life on the Congo as Described by a Brass Rod. Part II: Thirty-Three Native Stories as Told Round the Evening Fires. By the Rev. John H. Weeks. xxii and 468 pp. Ills., index. The Religious Tract Society, London. 1911. 5s. $8\frac{1}{2} \times 5\frac{1}{2}$.

For the general reader the method of this book is singularly inept. Yet it is the general reader who is going, as soon as the treasure is pointed out to him, to forget the fault of method and to enjoy a really brilliant record of life

on the lower Congo. The author, probably because he could thus best feel sure of publication, has chosen to write a volume intended to find a place in Sabbath School libraries in one of the strictest sects of English dissent; not only that, he has reverted to an absurd old fashion of having the story told by a mere rod of brass, the common medium of exchange value in the African jungle. Yet despite this forbidding fiction of construction the book is vivid, fairly crisp with life. Except for this absurd conversational bit of base metal the people stand out clear and distinct in the life which is theirs and show us what they are and how they live. The value of the book is ethnographic. Here, as throughout equatorial Africa, the keynote of interest for American students is Brer Rabbit. In these tales of the Congo—thankfully we note a hundred pages of them—the characters are the gazelle and the leopard. We find the tar baby in what must be its true beginning: the leopard sticks by virtue of the magic of unholy “juju” in the fetish image, a higher plane of thought than mere adhesion to sticky tar. Even in the Basubwa legend of Nakami the baby is coated with glue. In the country of Miss Cronise’s “Cunnie Rabbit, Mr. Spider and the other Beef,” in Sierra Leone, where we find a contamination of the Annacy mythos, it is to a wax girl that Mr. Spider sticks fast. If Mr. Weeks has done naught else for us he has given us the tar baby in its true and spiritual essence, the fetish image Nkondi.

WILLIAM CHURCHILL.

Dr. Walter Volz. Reise durch das Hinterland von Liberia im Winter 1906-1907. Nach seinen Tagebüchern bearbeitet von Dr. Rudolf Zeller. 167 pp. Ills., maps. A. Francke, Bern. 1911. Mk. 3.60. 9½ x 6½.

The back country of Liberia has remained practically a *terra incognita* to this day. Most of the stimuli which promoted exploration elsewhere were lacking there. Prospective colonists preferred countries better suited for cultivation than its almost impenetrable woods, and its fauna and flora seemed too little diversified to make it especially attractive to scientists. In addition, the lack of personal safety throughout the territory acted as a general deterrent. For, without the protection of a strong mother country, the Liberian government was hardly able to maintain its foothold on the coast, and the hinterland was for a long time an apple of discord between the neighboring powers. It was not until 1908 that Liberia made good its claim on it, by taking formal possession of its native settlements, just in time to prevent its annexation by France. It is owing to this state of things that the information which this book contains was dearly bought by the untimely death of its author. It is based on the contents of his diary and note books, which were worked over by a friend and reproduced as much as possible in the author’s own language.

Dr. Volz entered his field of work from Sherbro, Sierra Leone, crossing the western boundary of Liberia beyond Baiama, and thus stepping directly into the back country without touching the Liberian coast. The first country which he traversed in Liberia was that of the Bande tribe, a region of moderate hills, with more or less swampy bottoms between, and where the villages were built on the hills. They had a more or less regular, circular shape, and were protected by live hedges, four or more in succession, instead of palisades, which were planted across the roads, and had one opening in the center for a door. Proceeding eastward towards Sambatahun, the country was found less densely wooded and less hilly. Tobacco and rice were cultivated in the bottoms. Deserted villages were plenty, testifying the belligerent mood of the Bele tribe